

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BONN 03773 060056Z

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6975

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

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USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

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E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IT, GW

SUBJECT: SCHMIDT'S REMARKS ON ITALIAN COMMUNISTS

REFS: (A) BONN 3632 (B) ROME 3493

1. ON MARCH 4 THE OPPOSITION PRESS SPOKESMAN DEMANDED THAT CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT CLARIFY THE REMARKS HE HAD MADE BEFORE A FOREIGN PRESS CORPS DINNER ON FEBRUARY 25 CONCERNING COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION IN NATO GOVERNMENTS (REFTELS). THE NEXT DAY, MARCH 5, GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN GRUENEWALD DID SO. THE PUBLISHED ACCOUNT OF GRUENEWALD'S ORAL STATEMENT FOLLOWS:

BEGIN EMBASSY TRANSLATION: "COMMENTING ON REPORTS ALLEGED TO HAVE BEEN MADE BY THE FEDERAL CHANCELLOR CONCERNING THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY, GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN GRUENEWALD PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING CLARIFICATION. THE CHANCELLOR 'VOICED NO OPINION AT ALL' CONCERNING POSSIBLE COMMUNIST PARTY PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNMENT OF ITALY ALTHOUGH HE HAD BEEN REQUESTED TO DO SO. TO THE CONTRARY, THE CHANCELLOR HAD MADE IT
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PAGE 02 BONN 03773 060056Z

CLEAR THAT HE DID NOT WISH TO INTERFERE IN THE INTER-

NAL AFFAIRS OF OTHER COUNTRIES. SOME TIME LATER, IN AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT CONTEXT, THE CHANCELLOR HAD REFERRED TO THE FACT THAT COMMUNISTS HAD SHARED THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF GOVERNMENT IN TWO NATO STATES AND THAT 'THIS HAD NOT OVERTHROWN NATO'. GRUENEWALD CONTINUED THAT IT WAS ABSURD TO CONCLUDE FROM THIS FACTUAL STATEMENT (WHICH IS UNDENIABLE) THAT THERE ARE DIFFERENCES OF OPINION BETWEEN THE FEDERAL GERMAN GOVERNMENT AND...THE AMERICAN PRESIDENT...OR THE NATO COMMANDER IN CHIEF. IT WAS JUST AS ABSURD TO ATTEMPT TO DEDUCE FROM THIS FACTUAL STATEMENT THAT THE FEDERAL CHANCELLOR HAS A POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE ACTIVITIES OF COMMUNIST PARTIES IN NATO STATES." END
EMBASSY TRANSLATION.
HILLENBRAND

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